



**RHODE ISLAND
MEDICAL SOCIETY**

American College of
Emergency Physicians[®]

RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER

June 5, 2019

The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara
Chair
House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare
State House, Room 101
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Re 19H-6169

Rhode Island Medical Society and Rhode Island Chapter of the American College of Emergency Medicine oppose 19H-6169.

The Ambulance Service Advisory Board has long served the citizens of Rhode Island by using evidence-based analysis leading to best practice recommendations to the Department of Health. The board and committees have worked well and have served as conduits for information and expertise across the state. Because of their integrity, the resulting state regulations are well vetted and timely.

The proposed legislative changes remove the two RI Department of Health representatives that are very important sources of expertise and experience that should be a part of every decision. They bring first-hand knowledge about key issues and practical information regarding logistics and regulations. Their perspectives and input are imperative. It is not clear how the Board would be improved by replacing this specialized expertise as proposed.

The proposed legislation changes also introduces a level of direct legislative involvement that will be cumbersome, time consuming and inefficient. As proposed, the legislature would have to directly approve many changes. A time delay could be dangerous. For instance, drug shortages. EMS may need to substitute a different medication with little notice and the board is able to recommend changes swiftly. However, if the legislature must approve, this process could take months.

Does the legislature have the expertise or desire to become knowledgeable and take on the onus of responsibility to direct patient care?

What is the expected cost to implement this additional layer of bureaucracy?

We support the longstanding Department of Health mandate to regulate health and medical services to best serve the citizens of Rhode Island. The Ambulance Service Board has been successful example of collaboration amongst professionals to provide timely, practical, best practice advice that enhances Rhode Island's medical system.

Very truly yours,

Peter A. Hollmann, MD
President
RI Medical Society

Catherine Cummings, MD, FACEP
President
RI Chapter, American College of Emergency Physicians